

## **ABSTRACT**

The invention provides peptides designed to be highly reactive with antibodies from patients infected with oncogenic HPV. Also disclosed is a method for their use in an immunoassay to detect HPV infection and HPV associated epithelial cell abnormalities, most notably those associated with premalignant and malignant epithelial cell lesions. The peptides and the disclosed method are particularly useful for diagnosing carcinomas of the uterine cervix, or pre-stages thereof, or those at risk of development of carcinoma. The detection can be effected on blood samples, or other bodily fluid or tissue, by ascertaining the presence of IgA or IgG antibodies against HPV 16 and/or 18.